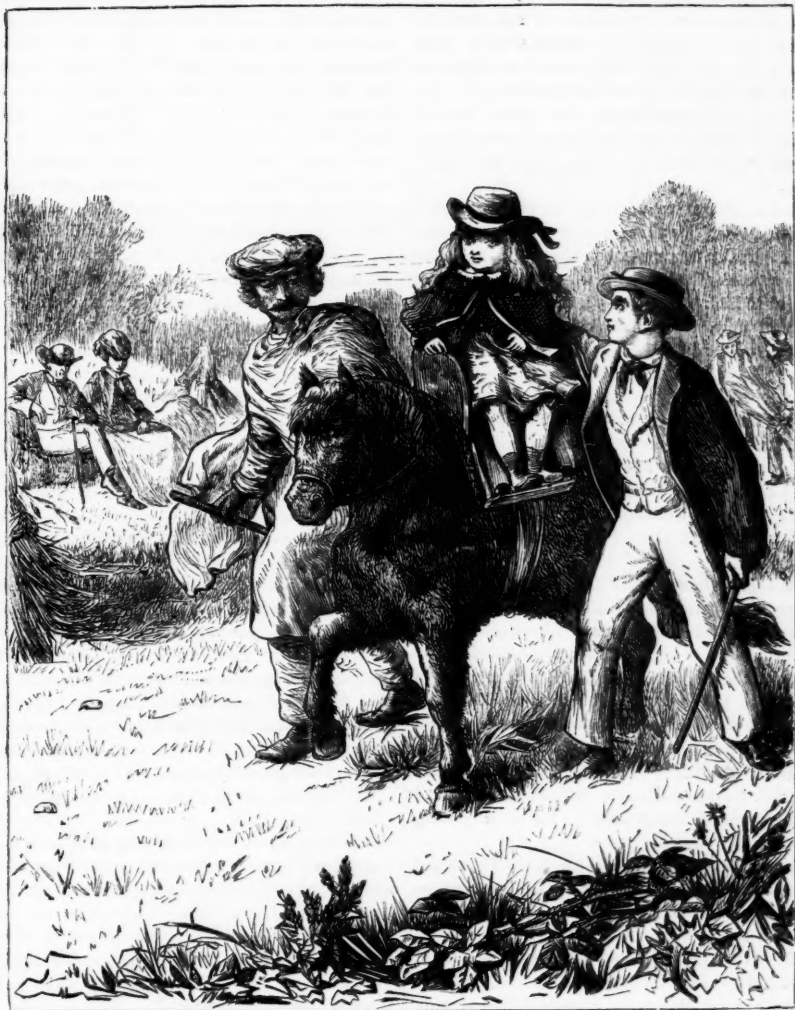


# THE QUIVER

— Saturday, September 30, 1871. —



"The fairy figure of little Chions Leigh"—p. 821.

## TRIED

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "A STORY OF VIONVILLE."

### CHAPTER LV.

THE letter fell from May's hands. Dying—her Sydney! Had she killed him? Dying—a Christian. What did that mean? She could scarcely collect her thoughts in the sudden excitement and be-

wilderment caused by his unexpected letter, only the wild longing to see him overcame all other feelings. Let him but come! let her but look upon his face and hear his voice once more! He spoke as if death

was actually near to him, and she felt ready to die herself in her terrible impatience, her frantic desire to annihilate the space between them. At least there should be no delay on her part. She would not even trust to her servants to send the telegram answering his letter by an entreaty that he would come at once. She snatched her garden-hat from the hall-table, and flew to the railway-station with a speed which made her sink on a chair, breathless and panting, when she reached the telegraph-office; but the message was sent immediately, and along with it one to Dr. Fleming, entreating him to see Sydney at once, and if possible, accompany him to Combe Bathurst.

This done, May returned home almost as quickly as she had left it; for though still unable to realise that he was really coming—that she could be going to see so soon the dear face on which she had scarce ever hoped to look again, she yet felt that she could get no rest now, save in making preparations for his arrival, and exhausting herself in plans for his comfort. She ordered rooms to be got ready on the ground floor, feeling sure that he would not have written as he had done, unless he had been so ill as to be unequal to much exertion. Would he come that day, or the next? She wearied herself in conjectures on this point, till in the course of the afternoon she received a telegram from Dr. Fleming telling her to expect them by the latest train that evening.

May thought the sun would never set that day, but at length it grew dark; little Chione was fast asleep, in spite of the excitement with which she had looked forward to seeing her father, whom she only faintly remembered; and even Harry's merry laugh had ceased to ring through the house. May was alone, and as the time drew near when the arrival might be expected, she went out to the portico of the house, and leant against one of the stone pillars that supported it, knowing that the first distant sound of the carriage-wheels would come to her more quickly there than in the drawing-room.

Her feverish agitation died away. She waited patient and motionless, and when at last the carriage drove to the door, though her heart was beating in heavy throbs, she could walk quietly down the steps, prepared for the sight she was to witness, be it what it might. Stevens, who had been watching almost as anxiously as herself for the travellers, had already flung open the hall-door, and the strong light from the lamp within streamed out upon the occupants of the carriage as they descended from it. Chunder, who was on the box-seat, sprang down immediately, and scarce giving himself time to make a hasty salaam to May, he hurried forward to assist his master. Dr. Fleming had already got out, and he did not even wait to greet May in any fashion before he proceeded with the utmost care to help Sydney Leigh to alight from the carriage.

It was no easy matter, for apparently the tall manly frame was weak as that of an infant. Supported by Dr. Fleming on the one side, and by Chunder on the other, Sydney slowly tottered up the steps, his panting breath showing how greatly the effort tried him. He looked round anxiously for May, however, and a glad smile brightened his thin pale face when he saw her. He held out his hand, but he could not speak, and Dr. Fleming whispered to her that he must be taken to his room at once, as he was much exhausted by his journey. Without a word, May took a lamp from the hall-table, and went on to show the way, and slowly, painfully, Sydney was brought into the room she had prepared for him with every comfort and luxury she could think of. He was laid down on the sofa and made to drink a little wine, and then Dr. Fleming, with thoughtful delicacy, drew Chunder to the other side of the room, where they could not witness the meeting between Sydney and May. She went forward and looked down for one moment on the face, more beautiful in this hour, when the seal of death was surely set upon it, than it had ever seemed to her before. Quite overcome, she sank on her knees by his side, and letting her head fall on his breast, could only gasp out, "Oh, my Sydney!"

Very tenderly he laid his hands upon her head, saying, "Darling May, I am so thankful to be with you once more; the only wish I had on earth is accomplished, now that I am here."

"But so ill," she murmured faintly, caressing the thin white hand she had taken in both her own.

"Yes, so ill that my time in this world must be very short," he answered with perfect calm; "only, dearest May, instead of being sorrowful, you must be glad with all your heart, for I owe it to you, and to you alone, that my brief earthly life is closing in such a glow of hope and joy as never shone on it before, through all its brightest hours."

She looked up at him with an earnest, eager glance.

"It is even so, my May," he said, with a smile; "you have opened to me that radiant gate, through which you have so long been gazing, to the Paradise beyond; and I, too, have caught upon my soul the light of the eternal day, which makes this little mortal life so dim and worthless, and death but the gentle friend that leads us home. You must be thankful, as I am, dearest."

"I am, indeed I am," she answered; "but how is it possible that I have influenced you in any way? it has been my bitter grief that I could do nothing for you all this year."

"Whereas, you have really done more for me than any one else in the world; but I will explain it all to you to-morrow. I promised our doctor there that I would not ask to speak to you to-night."

"I fear you have done too much already," said May, starting to her feet as she saw him lay his head

back on the pillow with a look of exhaustion. She glanced round to Fleming, who came instantly with some cordial he had been preparing for his patient. Sydney drank it, and then the doctor told him peremptorily that he was not to speak another word till morning, and that he was to remain only with his servant, who was to watch by him through the night.

"There will be no excitement in seeing Chunder's black face," said Fleming, with a smile, "so I shall ruthlessly consign you to him, and carry off Miss May."

"It will be happiness enough to know that I am under her roof," said Sydney, and taking May's hand, he drew her down to him and kissed her cheek; then she turned and followed Dr. Fleming out of the room.

He was going towards the drawing-room, but May touched him on the arm, and saying, "Would you come this way?" she went out once more into the portico, and leant against the pillar where she had been standing when the carriage drove up; then in the soft gloom where Fleming could not see her face, and with her eyes fixed on the stars in their eternal quietude, she said, "Now tell me all the truth."

"Do you require that I should tell it to you?" he answered, very gently.

There was a long pause, then she spoke, but so low that he could with difficulty catch the words, "Sydney is dying?"

"He is, undoubtedly. He cannot survive many days."

"But what has caused his illness? Could rest or care have saved him?"

Fleming detected the infinite pain in her tone, and understood it. "Nothing could have prolonged his life much longer. He did, in fact, receive a fatal injury in the fall which brought on his malady, and from the first it was a mere question of time. He was a very strong man originally, and therefore he has lingered much longer than most persons would."

"And where has he been since he left this place?"

"In India with Philip Evans."

#### CHAPTER LVI.

DR. FLEMING decided next morning that Sydney might be wheeled on his sofa into May's boudoir, which was near his own room; but this was the utmost extent of the exertion he must be allowed to make. It was noon before this arrangement was effected, as Leigh had been a good deal fatigued by a visit from his little daughter, who had, by his own wish, been sent to him early in the morning. Chione was out at play now with Harry, and May was alone when the door opened, and Chunder slowly pushed the smoothly-rolling couch into the room, and with a low salaam left them together.

Sydney held out his hands, and May sank down

on a low seat by his side in silence. "My May now," he said to her, tenderly, "for we shall part no more while I linger in this world; and hereafter I hope to share that sorrowless home to which your hopes have been turned so long. That prospect takes the sting from my death—for you as well as myself; does it not, dear May?"

"Yes, indeed," she answered, looking up at him brightly.

"You must hear, then, how it all came to pass. You know but too well, my May, that I have been a complete sceptic for many years back. I can see now that it was much more the scepticism of ignorance than of intellectual conviction, for I discarded the Christian faith without any real knowledge of it; and especially I had never sought to arrive at the truth by that way, which Evans says alone leads certainly and clearly up to God—the way of holiness. He quoted the words of Christ: 'If any man will do the will of my Father, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God.' On the foundation which your resolute self-sacrifice had laid, he built the superstructure of an intellectual as well as spiritual faith, which has become the very life of my soul, filling the grave itself with light, and eternity with rapturous joy."

"What happiness it is to hear all this!" said May, looking up with sparkling eyes.

The next few days were the strangest and the sweetest she had ever known. She never quitted Sydney's side except when Chunder took her place at night, and, with his hand clasped in hers, and his head often resting on her breast, they talked together of the land that seemed no longer far off to either of them, and of the happy day when May would join her first and only love upon the deathless shore. Earth and the things thereof seemed to fade away before their eyes, while the glorious realm of the faithful dead grew ever brighter to their view, and there was not a touch of sadness in their joyous tones as they spoke of Christ's wondrous love, and the fruit it would bear in perfect bliss throughout eternity.

Sydney grew daily weaker; but he suffered very little pain, and the expression of his beautiful refined face seemed to grow ever more entirely happy as he drew nearer to the end.

Dr. Fleming had been obliged to return to his patients in London; but both Sydney and May knew now, as well as he did, that medical skill could avail nothing, so they called in no other doctor, and, with the help of the faithful Hindoo, May tended him with unwearied care herself.

At last there came an evening—a fair, soft summer evening, when Sydney seemed peculiarly still and silent. May asked him if he felt at all worse, but he answered with a smile that he was only tired. "I want rest, my May, and I shall have it soon."

When his child came to kiss him before she went to bed, he held her for some moments close to his

heart, and then put her into May's arms, saying very softly, "Good night, my little Chione, till the resurrection morning." Then May understood it all. She gave the child to her nurse, and coming back with a swift step, knelt down beside Sydney. "My darling," he said, "I would rather not move into my bedroom to-night; let me stay here."

"Whatever you wish shall be done, dearest Sydney."

Chunder came in at the moment, and a word of explanation was sufficient for him. He sat down on the ground, at a little distance from his master's sofa, and watched him, with tears glistening in his black eyes.

"I cannot speak much, dear May," said Sydney, in very feeble tones; "but you know all my thoughts. Do not leave me; let me hold your hand to the last; and, darling, remember your promise—let me see your dear face looking bright and joyous, because of our eternal hope, when my eyes close upon it for the last time."

"It shall be so, my own dear love," she answered, and as the hours wore on, whenever he turned his dying gaze upon her, she met it with a smile.

He had lain for a long time with his eyes closed, breathing very faintly, and she felt his hand growing cold in hers. A longing to hear his voice once again came wildly over her.

"Sydney, my Sydney, speak to me only one word more," she said, kissing his pale lips with unutterable tenderness. To her he made no answer, but in a few minutes more—suddenly, as if he heard an urgent summons—he opened his eyes wide, clear, and bright as ever in his life's best hours, and raised them upwards with a look of rapturous recognition, so marked, so striking, that involuntarily May followed the direction of his ecstatic gaze, as if she expected to see the sight that blessed his keener vision; but her eyes still were veiled, though she knew on whom those of Sydney were fixed; for his beloved voice thrilled once more into her heart, as he cried out with a last effort of strength, "I see Him in His beauty, O Truth! O Life! O my God! who art love!"

Then over his death-shadowed face there broke a light as of the dawn of morning; and when the sudden glory faded, his shining eyes closed gently on the world, and the smile of unearthly rapture alone lingered on the lips over which the breath of mortal life would pass no more for ever.

#### CHAPTER LVII.

LET us take one last look at May Bathurst before we leave her to finish out her pure and peaceful life, with the light of heaven shining upon her, and a great calm within her heart.

Three months have passed since she stood, on a glorious summer day, in the ancient burial-place of

her family, and saw the grave close over the one love of her life. She was placed during the funeral ceremony on the same spot where she had sat with Sydney Leigh, the day after his first return from India, and surely now her own very life must have sunk despairing with him into that yawning tomb, if he had died in the miserable unbelief, the cold negation of all truth, with which he had defied his God and Redeemer then! But the sleepless compassion of her Lord, working through her own trial and suffering, had wrought in him the wondrous change which we have seen; and now from out the darkness of that grave, where only his perishable dust was lying, rose deathless hope and dauntless faith, and love eternal, linking her with him ever living, though absent, even then, and crowning her with the sure promise of that final consummation of bliss, when they should be for ever re-united in the changeless realms of light.

So May stood, calm and unrepining, by that open grave—only when the last rites were over, she did not move to go away, or take notice of any one, but remained with her solemn, tearless eyes fixed in such deep thought upon the new-made resting-place, that those who stood around deemed it best and most kind to let her stay there undisturbed; and in silence they went out through the great gates, one by one, leaving her alone—yet not alone. Crouched at a little distance was the faithful Hindoo, who now looked up with a piteous expression of compassion and grief into the face of her who, as he well knew, had loved his dead master with a love far passing human words. A low groan burst from his lips as he gazed upon her, and May heard it, and turned to him. She could not speak, but as she met the glance of his dark, sorrowful eyes, she held out her hand to him. He took it in both his own, bending till he touched it with his forehead, and murmured in a low broken tone, "Missie May, never see master any more!—poor Missie May!—never more, never more!"

"Oh yes, Chunder, I shall," she answered—a light as from the other world dawning in her sad eyes while she spoke; "I shall see him again in the land where Christ is King, for he is the resurrection and the life, and he bids us come to him that we might have that life eternal which he alone can give us. Sydney is gone, and I shall follow, and we shall meet to part no more at the feet of our crucified Lord."

"And Chunder too!" exclaimed the Hindoo, stretching out his arms to heaven. "O King Christ! let Chunder come too!"

May turned to him with a look of glad surprise.

"Chunder, do you really mean it?" she said. "He will hear you, if you are indeed prepared to believe on him and to worship him, and so to give yourself up to him, that you shall be altogether his."

"Yes, Chunder is ready to be a Christian," he



replied. "Master told Chunder in the ship that he ought to believe whatever Missie May had taught him, for she was so good and true to her God, that God would make her know the truth; and Sahib Evans say the same; and when master was dying, he spoke to the King Christ, and saw him. Chunder knows he did, and then he went to him; and Chunder believes in the good King who died for men, and wants to be with him for ever."

And now it is late in the autumn, and the day of the "harvest home" is come, which May's father had always made an occasion of great festivity among his people, and she continued the custom. The reapers are all gathered in the field, where the last sheaves are being piled up on a wagon, which is decorated with flowers and branches, and the golden rays of the setting sun are falling in softened splendour over the whole gay scene.

The entire household from Combe Bathurst have been present there for some time, and now Mrs. Denton has just gone home in her wheel chair; while May has sat down on the trunk of a fallen tree, with her fast friend Dr. Fleming by her side.

Her aspect is very calm and sweet—her voice when she speaks low and gentle—and only sometimes there is a shadowy look in her eyes, as if she saw not the things of this world, or had much part in them, which seems to show that neither her treasure nor her heart is any more on earth.

Her gaze just now, however, is following the movements of a rough Shetland pony, on which is seated the fairy figure of little Chione Leigh, with her sunny curls falling like rings of gold over her black frock. Chunder holds the bridle and guides her steed carefully over the stubble, while Harry Bathurst, with his arm round her waist, walks by her side, and guards her from the least risk of a fall.

"What a devoted knight Harry is to his liege lady," said Dr. Fleming; "one does not often see a school-boy so attentive to a child greatly younger than himself."

"His affection for her is something wonderful," said May; "and she returns it with almost equal intensity. I am most thankful to see it. It is a source of great happiness to me, and, I must confess, of hope also."

"I guess what you mean," said Dr. Fleming, with a smile.

"I suppose in this changeful world one ought never to build castles in the air," said May, "but I must say I do indulge in one very bright day-dream for the future of those children. If they retain their strong love for one another ten years hence, it may come to pass; and it would be such a comfort to me if I could leave them happy together when I go hence."

"It seems likely enough, judging from present appearances," said Dr. Fleming; "and certainly it is very natural that you should have made such a plan;

for I happen to know that the most unromantic man in the world cherishes precisely the same scheme for these children."

"Mr. Wilbraham, I suppose?"

"Yes; he has often told me how much he hopes their union may take place some day; but his reason for wishing it is that it would restore the Bathurst estate to its original proportions—as Chione inherits the quarry lands which you transferred to her mother, and I suppose you fully purpose that Harry shall succeed you as far as the remainder is concerned."

"Undoubtedly. His character is developing so satisfactorily that I should have no hesitation in naming him my heir at once. Like Mr. Wilbraham, I should be very glad if through these children the estate was restored to the condition in which my father left it to me; but I wish for their marriage chiefly because I should like to think that they would enjoy the happiness which some of us have missed, as well as avoid the errors into which we have fallen."

"They will have your experience to guide them, dear May."

"Yes, that is one of the 'uses of adversity,'" she answered with her sweet smile.

"I suppose Chunder will never leave you now?"

"I think not—he is devotedly attached to little Chione; and Mr. Evans considers that now he is a Christian, it will be best for him to remain in this country; his own people would be so hopelessly exasperated against him."

"Have you heard from Evans, then?"

"Yes; he was so kind as to write to me when the news reached him of——" She could not go on.

"Of Sydney's death?" said Fleming, gently.

"Yes; he wrote at once, and with such exceeding gentleness and sympathy. His letter was an unspeakable consolation to me, though it rather surprised me, for all his sternness and severity seemed gone, and he spoke only of thankfulness and peace and hope."

"Because he no longer required to brace you for the struggle, my child. He knew that you had fought your fight and won the victory."

"What a fight and what a victory has his been!" said May, after a moment's silence. "I do not think it would be possible to imagine a more noble life. He says nothing himself of what he is doing, but I hear from other sources that his toil is unrelenting, and his success quite wonderful."

"Yes, he is accomplishing a great work indeed. I do not suppose he will ever return to England."

"He tells me distinctly in this letter that he will end his life in India," said May, "and he instructs me how to act with regard to many of the people in whom he was interested here, as he can do no more for them himself. He carves out plenty of work for me," she added, with a smile, "for he thinks that much may be done to improve the condition of the poor tenants on the estate."

"And yourself, dear May," said Fleming, in a tone of deep feeling, as he laid his hand on hers, "how is it with yourself while you have so many schemes for the happiness of others?"

"It is as Mr. Evans said," she answered: "I have peace and hope." Then, after a moment's silence, she went on: "I think my life is very much like that twilight landscape before our eyes. The sunshine has been withdrawn, and it lies wrapt in shadows soft and still; but there is a golden gleam on the horizon, telling of light in other spheres, to which I hope to press onward through all my future upon earth, if only I may reach it at the last."

"Ah, my dearest May! would we were all as sure of entering the golden gates of God's own realm as I think you are!"

"If ever I do reach that blessed home," she said, clasping her hands tightly together, "it will be because my Lord, in his great compassion, suffered me not to remain in any delusion, or to give him the semblance of devotion, while my heart was far away from him. Again and again he drove me to the test, as you know, till he had stripped my soul bare of all its sophistries—all its hollow worship and disguised rebellion, and compelled me to see that there can be no compromise, no half measures, in the service of the Most High God. Ah! if ever I am allowed to look upon the face of Christ, my first act will be to fall down at his feet, and adore and bless him, because I have been so mercifully, so wisely TRIED!"

THE END.

## THE FEET OF JESUS.

### CHAPTER VII.—THE PLACE FOR INDIVIDUAL SORROW.—PART II.

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A., AUTHOR OF "THE 'I WILLS' OF THE PSALMS," ETC. ETC.

**N**OW let us inquire what Mary said when she fell at Jesus's feet.

We have no record of any formal approach, of any actual words of reverential acknowledgment; the one act of falling at her Lord's feet combined within itself at once Mary's reverence and grief.

And in truth what she said did the same. For in those words, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died," she declared her belief in the power and love of that Lord; and her own bitter sorrow that, because he had not been on the spot, all was now hopelessly over, the beloved one had gone.

This, the saying of Mary at Jesus's feet must now occupy our attention for a little while.

We observe that the two sisters, of wholly opposite characters, both say the same thing: "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died."

No doubt this had been the burden both of the thought and conversation of the sisters ever since their brother died.

There had been anxious waiting ever since that touching message was sent off by the sisters to Jesus, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick." Many a time, perhaps, they went out alone or together to look in the direction from which the welcome footsteps were to be expected; and questioned within their hearts, or one with the other, "Will he come soon; why tarry his feet when the one he loves is sick even unto death?" It may be that they watched the ebbing tide of their brother's life, and asked each other how long he could hold out, and if he could do so until the Lord should come. But the Lord came not.

Weary hours stole on, but there was no sign of the One who could heal; and at last, the healing-time had past, the death-time came—yes, burial too; and not until all was over in the fullest sense did Jesus come.

It is no wonder, then, that each of the sisters used the selfsame words when the Lord appeared, for their minds, and doubtless their home-words, had been running in the selfsame groove.

But these words are full of teaching for ourselves. And first let us note how each said, "My brother." There is something very touching in the death of Lazarus being not only a family loss, but an individual one.

The family was made up of two *mys*. Martha speaks of Lazarus as if he had been wholly hers, and Mary does the same; with each of them it is "My brother." As the love had been in life, so is it spoken of in death.

Here we are brought into somewhat of a strait, for the two remarks which we wish to make seem as though they contradict one the other.

Happy is that family where each has such property in the other that the very habit of thought leads to the use of the word *my*.

Unhappy is that family where there is nothing but a series of *mys*—where the meaning of *our* is not known as well as that of *my*.

We doubt not that the *our* as well as the *my* was known and recognised, and that the power of it was lived in, in the family at Bethany; but now earthly grief was having its own way, and, as is its custom, it concentrated the mind on personal feeling, and to some extent excluded the thought of others. And in truth that is one of

the perils of grief; that nursing of it in our own bosom, that hugging of it to ourselves alone, that unwillingness to part with any of it, and to see that others are shipwrecked in it as well as ourselves.

Now let us contrast this *my* of Mary, and also of Martha, with the *our* of Jesus.

Jesus knew that Lazarus was dead. He also knew what individual love was, for we are told that he loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus; they are spoken of not as the family at Bethany, but one by one; but when he speaks to his disciples about the death-sleep, he says not, "*My* friend Lazarus sleepeth," but, "*Our* friend Lazarus sleepeth."

Happiest is that family where many *mys* combine into many *ours*—the two—each occupying its own place, giving the ideal of the "family" in sorrow.

"If thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." There is something very touching in that confidence, as there is in all the great confidences of love. Jesus must have felt it so;—he saw his power over disease acknowledged,—his love so reposed in, that it was thought impossible that it could allow any harm to happen to those who were loved; no note whatever is taken of what the virulence of the disease has been, had he only been there all would have been well.

And Jesus, we may be sure, received that confidence as it was meant; the weight of the family's sorrow was not laid on him in vain, especially when he knew that he might have been there—that he had purposely delayed.

One would have thought that Jesus would have been cut to the heart at hearing such words as these, when he knew well that he might have averted all this sorrow; and that it was owing to purposed delay on his part that Lazarus had died. But he was quite calm. We see that he was, by what happened between him and Martha, when she used these selfsame words, and when he replied to them.

We see here plainly how some of love's true thoughts may, however, be only surface ones. Love is not the less real because it is shallow in the reach of its thought; it may be untrue in its reasoning, and ill-informed as regards its knowledge, and yet be sterling and real in itself.

Now, confidence—the confidence of love—even with a mistake, may often be better than suspicion with accuracy and correctness.

Our mistakes concerning Christ are our ignorance—and there may be much ignorance without guilt; but our want of confidence, no matter what form it assumes, is our sin. There are simple people making great mistakes, who occupy a higher place in the kingdom of God than wiser ones, who are cold and calculating, and seeking to

be in their religion, we might almost say, mathematically correct.

God is tender and patient with honest mistakes. If he were not, where should we be in our daily service, or our daily life?

"If thou hadst been here, my brother had not died."

And he might have been, but she did not know that; she did not know what had kept him. We can scarcely speculate as to how exactly she would have addressed him if she had.

There are many things which it is well for us not to know, concerning which, if we did know all, a strange storm might arise in our minds.

The fact is, we are surrounded with *ifs* in life. They are a continual element of vexation and perplexity. It would be an amazing source of peace and comfort if we could get rid of them altogether. This word *if* has had power to distract, to set up all sorts of speculations, to open many a door to unbelief, to aggravate the circumstances of many a trial.

We sometimes conjure up all sorts of possible, and at times impossible, *ifs*, and the one as vexing as the other. We have to do with things not as they might have been, but as they have been, or as they are. Most of our *ifs* are little better than suggestions of better-arranged providences, as though we could have fitted matters in much better than has been the case.

In truth, many of our vexing and disquieting, and all our despairing *ifs*, have a depth far below what we imagine; they go down into discontent with Providence. It is not suggested that this was the case with Mary here, but it surely is so with us.

And as in Mary's case the *if* fixed her mind entirely on the past, so in our case it does the like, hiding out the restorations and life which may be even at the very threshold.

Martha seems to have passed altogether beyond her sister in this matter; for she immediately qualifies her *if* by a *but*. "But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, he will give thee."

The *if* can never be safely used, except with the quickly-following *but*.

And now mark how Mary came to be at Jesus's feet. "Then when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw him, she *fell* down at his feet." When we saw her last, she was *sitting* at those feet, now she has *fallen* at them.

Such are the vicissitudes of the spiritual life. Where we are found sitting to-day, we may be found fallen to-morrow. The place of our rest may be that of our struggle; that of our peace may become that of our agony.

The fiercest throes of the soul have been experienced at the feet of Jesus. They have not been

felt in the grosser conflicts with the tempter, but in heart-sorrows with our greatest friend. It is indeed a wonderful sight to see a calm spirit—calm in the teaching learned at Jesus's feet—cast down there in bitter agony.

Whatever may be our spiritual destiny—with whatever shaking of soul we are to be tried, only let it be at the feet of Jesus. Whatever down-castings of soul I am to experience, only let them be there—there Mary wept, and Jesus wept too.

In Mary, the anguish of grief hid out for the moment the comfort she might have had. To weep in her Lord's presence, seemed all that she now could do. This was the only comfort she had, it was the natural effect of a natural feeling; and just shows us how little nature can do for us in our deep trial-times.

The sympathy of feeling in Jesus was recognised,—his power of help was clouded; in a word, the natural was apparent, the supernatural was veiled. The time was one of great shaking of faith, and human feeling was so in the ascendant, that faith had little place given it for working at all.

We should learn from the shortcoming of this sifter at Jesus's feet; we must seek in our trial-times to recognise Christ in his entirety—his power of sympathy and help. It is by looking at Jesus in the perfect balance of his nature, in its fulness, that we find peace.

No doubt, it is often very little we can do when we get to the feet of Jesus under circumstances similar to Mary's. We too are so agitated that we can only fall down and weep; we also have a clouded and shortened vision; we are encompassed with perplexities and *ifs*; yes, those *ifs* occupy our thoughts more than anything else.

Well, be it so; yet to those feet let us come, with our agitations and our perplexities, if we have nothing else to bring, but at any rate with our very selves.

For after all, that is the great point, the bringing of our very selves. Let us not wait to bring more faith, or the power of doing better before Jesus; it is ourselves he wants.

It is quite true better things might have been expected of us than we can show when we get there; we may not be able to act in a way at all times proportioned to our advantages and opportunities. We may give cause for rebuke as Philip did—"Have I been so long with thee, and hast thou not known me, Philip?" But all this must be put down as so much loss and shame, and even with the loss and shame must we be found in our great agitations at the feet of Jesus.

Thither indeed must we go; and may we, however unconsciously, yet so act in sorrow, as to draw others with us into the presence of the Lord, and make them witnesses of his work.

We know not what wonderful things may be shown to those who are brought into the presence of the Lord. Perhaps all that we on our part can show is sorrow, and poor weak faith. Some *ifs* and small outputtings of conscious union with him; but we know not what he will do. Many may be brought to believe through our deep woe.

Setting aside, however, all else that has been advanced, great will be the profit of these lines, if they induce any believer in his time of agitation, when the still waters are broken up, to go just as he is, and cast himself, with all his perplexity, his shortcomings of faith, and everything else, at the feet of Jesus.

## WITNESSES FROM THE DEAD.

### STONES AND COINS AND INSCRIPTIONS.

**T** will prove interesting and instructive to gather together and arrange in this paper, as in a cabinet, a few of the many remaining witnesses to the great historic facts of the Bible, which have been preserved or drifted down the currents of time.

The deluge of Noah, as told in Genesis, is a literal fact and occurrence in the history of our planet. This is proved by references external to the Word of God.

The Osiris and Isis of Egyptian mythology are, it is evident from their history, Noah and his wife. The Mexicans retain a tradition that the original pair from whom they are descended, were saved from destruction in a universal flood by floating on a raft. Yao, among the Chinese, is said to have saved that people from a universal flood. Lucian

gives a history of the deluge from the archives of Hierapolis slightly differing from that in the Mosaic narrative. He writes that "Deucalion was saved in consequence of his great piety; that this was by means of a great ark which he and his wife occupied, and that along with them in the ark were horses, goats, lions, &c."

Alluding to the same subject, Cuvier asks:—"Is it possible that mere accident should afford so striking a result as to unite the traditional origin of the Assyrian, Indian, and Chinese monarchies to the same epoch of about 4,000 years from this time? Could the ideas of nations who possessed almost no natural affinities—whose language, religion, and laws had nothing in common—could they conspire to one point, did not truth bring them together?"





"Of love at the wayside spring"—p. 828.

Of the testimony of Berosus the Chaldean, Josephus thus speaks: "All the writers of the barbarian histories make mention of this flood and this ark. Among them is Berosus, who thus writes: 'It is said there is still some part of the ship or ark in Armenia, at the mountain of the Corycidsæans, and that some people carry off the bitumen, which they take away and use as amulets for averting mischiefs.'"

Such are some valuable suggestive and independent testimonies to the historic occurrence of one of the facts recorded by Moses. These testimonies are increasing and cumulative at the same time, under the active analysis and induction of modern research.

The confusion of tongues at Babel is not without similar external memorials of its occurrence as a fact. The late Cardinal Wiseman states, in his work on "Science and Revealed Religion," that all languages have similarity enough to indicate a common source, and enough to show the circumstance of a dislocation and of a fracture having occurred in their transmission. This might also be shown by extensive collocation and comparison. Max Müller—no mean authority—observes: "The science of language leads us up to that highest summit from which we see into the very dawn of man's life on earth, and when and where these words, which we have heard so often from the days of our childhood, 'And the whole earth was of one language, and one speech,' assume a meaning more natural, more intelligible, and more convincing than we ever marked before."

Berosus the Chaldean states: "At this time the ancient race of men were so puffed up with their strength and tallness of stature, that they began to despise and condemn the gods, and laboured to erect that very lofty tower which is now called Babylon, intending thereby to scale heaven. But when the building approached the sky, behold, the gods called in the aid of the winds, and by their help overturned the tower, and cast it to the ground. The name of the ruins is still called Babel, because until that time all men had used the same speech, but now there was sent on them a confusion of many and diverse tongues."

Of the rock in Horeb there remains not merely a memorial, there is found the rock itself, retaining the indestructible proof of its use. "We came," says a traveller, "to the celebrated rock at Meribah. It still bears striking evidence of the miracle. It is isolated in a narrow valley about 200 yards broad. There are on the face of the rock four or five fissures, one above the other, each of them about a foot and a half long, and a few inches deep. What is remarkable, they run along the breadth of the rock, and are not rent downwards. They are more than a foot asunder, and there is a channel worn between them by the

gushing of the water. The Arabs still reverence the rock." Sir Frederick Henniker describes it, "as an irregular block of granite, twelve feet high, and fifteen feet long, and seven wide. A kind of water-furrow, about eight inches in width, is visible on two of its sides. That the incrustation is the effect of water, I have not the slightest doubt."

This deposition of calcareous matter must have come from the water, not from the granite rock, which is silicious.

Another traveller describes it thus: "It is about fifty feet in circumference, and pierced with twenty-four holes, each hole a foot long, and an inch broad. The holes on one side are so far from communicating with those of the other that they are not so much as opposite to each other. It is to be observed that this and the other rocks are in a very dry and barren ground, and no spring or other water is found near them. There is a perfect smoothness from the inferior lip of each hole to the ground. The edges of the holes and grooves are lined with a fine slender green moss, though not the smallest herb appears on any other part of the rock."

Here is a testimony from the rock. Its identity is not disputed. Its attestation of the historic truth of the writings of Moses, and of the supernatural interposition of God on this occasion, is complete.

The memorable incident recorded by Moses, to the effect that fiery serpents stung the Israelites, and that a brass serpent fixed on a pole by the ordinance of God healed them, is in some degree vindicated or implied as facts, by the strange use and homage of the serpent long extensive in heathen worship and mythology. These remarkable references to the serpent are found in the Bible: his success in the temptation of man; his stinging the Israelites in the desert, with their cure by their looking at a serpent of brass; and the turning of the rod of Moses into a live serpent. The heathen mythology connects the serpent with the staff of Esculapius and the wand of Hermes. A living serpent was kept in the Acropolis at Athens. Serpents are frequently represented on Greco-Egyptian coins. On one of Gordian's is seen a serpent on an altar, worshipped by a man. On ancient sculptures, and on coins the serpent is seen entwined around a pole, sometimes with the word *saviour* (saviour) below it. The serpent is still worshipped in Delhi.

When we remember the distorting nature of oral tradition, we can easily account for much of the debasing absurdity apparent in these strange usages.

The widespread and long-continued worship of the serpent in pagan lands, and the association of its representation with healing, naturally point and carry us back to the Scripture narrative as the original of which these heathen rites are refracted rays. This becomes more likely when we recall the fact, that the very Israelites, who were healed by

the brass serpent, gave to it the adoration and gratitude which were due to God only. It is this injury and healing, thus associated in Scripture records with the serpent, that accounts for the perverted usage so widespread in heathendom.

Daniel was carried away a captive into Babylon, upwards of 600 years before the Christian era. He was wise, learned, and truly good. For his sincerity, boldness, and consistent piety he was cast into a den of lions, ravenous with hunger, in which he remained unhurt. Traces indicative of the occurrence continue to be found. Rich describes a colossal statue of a lion, under which lies a prostrate human figure, found among the ruins of the Kasr, or the western palace of Babylon. Silver coins fished up from the Euphrates represent castellated buildings standing over dens filled with lions. Another coin represents a man successfully combating a lion. Another coin represents a man—plainly a Jew—standing on two sphinxes, and fighting successfully two lions.

A relic from Susa, of which Daniel was governor, is a very interesting memorial indeed. It is of white marble. Sir Robert K. Porter thus describes it: "It does not exceed ten inches in width and depth, and measures twenty inches long. It is hollow within, as if to receive some deposit; three of its sides are cut in bas-relief; two of the sides with similar representations of a man, apparently naked, excepting a sash around his waist. There is a sort of cap on his head, and his hands are bound behind him. Two lions in sitting postures appear on either side, each placing a paw on his head."

Nothing is more probable than that this was meant to be a memorial of Daniel in the lions' den, and so far, therefore, it is corroborative of the truth of the Scripture narrative.

A coin found in the ruins of Babylon, in the possession of Mr. Burgoyne, represents three figures of men in a furnace, while outside is a gigantic idol standing on a plain, surrounded by prostrate worshippers. There can be no misinterpretation of this reference.

Near Mount Sinai are found numerous inscriptions on the rocks, copies of which are given by Pocock. Their interpretation has not yet been wholly mastered. One inscription of great age begins with the words: "All-merciful God!" Another inscription on a rock, between Suez and Sinai, has been translated by the Rev. C. F. Grey: "The everlasting Jehovah bless thee!" Is it too much to infer from the rock *in situ*, and the Hebrew inscription, that these words were written by the Israelites at Sinai, and so far therefore constitute thrilling proof of the historic truthfulness of the Mosaic narrative of their wanderings in that portion of the peninsula? Thus the stone cries out at the wall, "Thy word is truth."

Coins have been fished up from the waters of the

Euphrates which point back to scenes and persons and incidents which occurred 3,000 years ago. Thus thirty centuries proclaim the existence and works of Moses, that ancient servant, and the truth of Scripture, that Divine and radiant record of immortality and life and truth.

Doubts have been expressed of the accuracy of the account of the Tower of Babel as the site of Nebuchadnezzar's golden image. Assuming the cubit to be eighteen inches, the image would be ninety feet in height and nine feet in breadth. Herodotus, a heathen historian, gives the following account—an account that bears evidence of being the broken tradition of history:—"The temple of Jupiter Belus, whose huge gates of brass may still be seen, is a square building, each side of which is two furlongs. In the midst rises a tower, of the solid depth and height of one furlong: upon which, resting as upon a base, seven other lesser towers are built in regular succession. The ascent is on the outside; which, winding, from the ground, is continued to the highest tower; and in the middle of the whole structure there is a convenient resting-place. In the last tower is a large chapel, in which is placed a couch, magnificently adorned, and near it a table of solid gold; but there is no statue in the place. In this temple there is also a small chapel, lower in the building, which contains a figure of Jupiter, in a sitting posture, with a large table before him; these, with the base of the table and the seat of the throne, are all of the purest gold, and are estimated by the Chaldeans to be worth 800 talents. On the outside of this chapel there are two altars: one is gold, the other is of immense size, and appropriated to the sacrifice of full-grown animals; those only which have not yet left their dams may be offered on the golden altar. On the larger altar, at the anniversary festival in honour of their god, the Chaldeans regularly consume incense to the amount of a thousand talents. There was formerly in this temple a statue of solid gold, twelve cubits high; this, however, I mention from the information of the Chaldeans, and not from my own knowledge."

Prideaux gives the following description:—"Nebuchadnezzar's golden image is said indeed in Scripture to have been sixty cubits—that is, ninety feet high; but this must be understood of the image and pedestal both together; for that image being said to be but six cubits broad or thick, it is impossible that the image would have been sixty cubits high; for that makes its height to be ten times its breadth or thickness, which exceeds all the proportions of a man, no man's height being above six times his thickness, measuring the slenderest man living at the waist. But where the breadth of this image was measured is not said; perchance it was from shoulder to shoulder; and then the proportion of six cubits breadth

will bring down the height exactly to the measure which Diodorus has mentioned; for the usual height of a man being four and a half of his breadth between the shoulders, if the image were six cubits broad between the shoulders, it must, according to this proportion, have been twenty-seven cubits high, which is forty and a half feet."

The independence of Israel and Judah, as distinct kingdoms, is indicated in the Assyrian inscription. The kings of each are indicated there also. The King of Judah is so called. The King of Israel is called Beth Khumri—i.e., of the house of Omri.

Judah was invaded by Shishak, King of Egypt,

in the fifth year of Rehoboam, with an army of cavalry and infantry "without number." He took the fenced cities, and the capital was spared by the conqueror, by his being bought off by treasures from the Temple, while Rehoboam became a servant and tributary to Egypt. The Scripture narrative is found almost verbatim on the outside of the great temple at Karnac.

It is an interesting and instructive fact, that the wider the area and the minuter the investigations of travellers, the richer and ampler are the discoveries of the historic truth of Scripture, in the remains and rocks and ruins of heathendom.

### LONGINGS.

**M**AY long for the quiet of the lonely brake,  
And the hedgerows white with may;  
For the beauty that grows on the dimpled lake

When kissed by the dying day:

I may yearn for the music that haunts the woods—  
Leafy, and grand, and old;  
For the thunder that roars in the mountain floods,  
And the fields with their sheaves of gold:

I may sigh for a sight of the gentle flowers,  
And the butterfly's tinted wing;  
For the glorious vision in twilight hours  
Of love at the wayside spring:

But the sounds, oh! the sounds I am doomed to hear

Are the sounds of the busy street;  
And the sighs that my spirit is racked to bear  
Are the footprints of naked feet.

And my heart it grows heavy from hour to hour  
With looking on man's distress;  
With looking and longing, and never the power  
To lighten or make it less.

O breezy mountains, O glowing skies,  
O meadows and rippling streams,  
Though ye come not to gladden my waking eyes,  
I have ye all in my dreams.

MATTHIAS BARR.

### HARD, BUT HEALTHFUL.

**I**CAN'T bring myself to like the man who will not own a fault. If we had to reason ourselves into the duty of doing so, there might be a shadow of defence, but the heart is a sound theologian in such matters, and summarily dismisses all pleas for the refusal. We cannot hoodwink or talk over conscience. No side issues, veils, special pleadings, or equivocations avail us. We never can persuade ourselves that it is right, after doing wrong, to stick to it.

It is one of the hardest things to put ourselves in the wrong, and yet there are times when self-accusation becomes epidemic. A great public danger or calamity fills the churches for a time, and melts all but the hardest. An earnest preacher, in special cases, sends a thrill of penitence through multitudes, as in the revival services of different dates, or under such a ministry as that of Whitefield. Great numbers forget their timidity, discard their self-justifications, and confess their sins, like the crowds round John at Jordan, or round

Peter at Pentecost. God often uses such agencies for lasting good, but they are to be watched carefully. Excitement may pass into abiding conviction: it often does; but it is too often only a splash on the top, when the tide all the time runs the other way.

To own our faults to each other is the dictate of nature no less than of Scripture.

Confession *between man and man* is a first duty. Wrong is half atoned if frankly admitted and regretted. It soothes injured self-respect, and is a repayment in self-humiliation for the hurt inflicted. Not to own a fault is to defend it. It is very hard, no doubt, to plead guilty, but what less can we do if we have sinned, and how otherwise can we triumph over the bad in our own hearts? False pride stands out: a manly sense of duty feels that a just debt is never too soon paid, cost what self-denial it may to pay it.

Minute confession of details is not required; nor need we tell every one our faults. To do either would often be unfair to ourselves, or to those



dependent on us, and would do no good. Some sins are best confessed only by amendment. To tell every one, or any, that we have been gamblers, impure livers, drunkards, or the like, is to feed scandal, not godliness; to ruin our families, and to spread purulent gossip. The publican could, likely, have told an exciting story, but he contented himself with seven words, whispered into God's ear alone. Some sins are to be buried like rags with the plague in them; some to be repaired like Zaccheus's, by a rich usury of conscience-money.

Confession to *ourselves* is as healthful as it is difficult. The eye that sees everything does not see itself. Nobody sees himself as others see him. We walk through the pleasant chambers of our souls, and dwell fondly on all that is inviting, but we instinctively avoid the secret spot where sin crouches, hidden in deep darkness. We try to make ourselves think we have seen all, but it is very rare that we are honest enough to have this said truly. You see that pool in the woods—half-hidden with green branches—busy life on it and over it; the light shining brightly back from the smooth surface; but underneath, out of sight, newts, and creeping things, and the deep ooze. It is a picture of the heart. We see over it and a little way through, but the depths lie, black, out of sight.

Don't say there's no use of self-accusation in your case. That you should think so proves that you are worse than you suppose. People begin well, but, after a time, the first impulse grows feeble, and it is well if there be nothing worse than a standstill; it is more likely there will be a falling back. Tender, sensitive, enthusiastic at starting, they soon come to judge of things by the practice of others, and sink to the level of their neighbours. Every one needs to review his life daily. Improvement is a hard hill to climb; for every step up there is a good deal of slipping down again. Be honest with yourselves, however painful it be. Suspect self-flattery. There is no end of the cheats and quibbles we try to pass on conscience to quiet it, or get its approval. Not a faculty but plays the devil's attorney. To get off with our sin left to us we will do anything.

To confess to God is the natural end of true humiliation. You may think it easier to abase yourself before your neighbour, but the mood that stumbles at the one will find itself repeated in the other. If we can bring ourselves to real lowliness, it will be indifferent towards whom it shows itself. The trouble is, our self-righteousness. We are ready enough to confess our *sinfulness*, but to confess our *sins* is a different matter. To have faults only makes us like our neighbours, but to particularise them is to arraign ourselves specifically. There is no humiliation in admitting that we are like everybody else—unfortunate heirs of

an unhealthy spiritual constitution, but to go into detail and plead guilty to individual offences, brings blame unpleasantly home to us. Yet we but mock ourselves with anything else, and mock God if we think he will accept anything less. To come before him and ask forgiveness while we cherish a pride which, in effect, denies our need of it, is only self-deception. It is no use thinking you are humble to him, if you are not already humble to your brother. Not to be willing to admit all your sins is to spoil your admission of any. To have your heart half thawed won't do; there must be no ice left in its secret centre. The fruits of a true spiritual life will not grow where only the surface soil is soft. If you cannot humble yourself to your neighbour, what can be the good of going to God with a mask of humility drawn over such a spirit of pride? It is pitiful to see how some act. I have known people keeping up grudges against their husbands, or wives, or children, or acquaintances, refusing to make matters up with them, sulking and pouting, letting black anger simmer in their hearts for weeks together, for little or nothing, or when they themselves were most in the wrong, if not wholly so, and all the time, they would say their prayers, and go to church, and think themselves the most honest penitents in the world. Out upon a penitence that keeps up grudges! Not to hasten to make peace with your fellow-man is a sure sign that you have not made it with your God.

Flippant, light-hearted admissions are, in some moods, easy: earnest, hearty self-condemnation is the hardest thing in the world. Our good opinion of ourselves is a law of our nature. We can't believe that people with so much good in them as we, can be so very bad. We tell over the beads of our virtues daily, and forget our faults. Our sick souls may be fast dying, but we can't realise it. Is not the look pretty much as it should be, and is the hand not warm and living? We forget the raging fever at the heart—deep hidden, but all the more surely fatal. Spiritual cosmetics to paint and enamel faded virtues are in universal use.

False pride is at the bottom of our difficulty. It is the evil angel that bars the way to the tree of life. Not that all pride is wrong; if so, it would not have been made part of our nature. There is a noble pride, and there is a base. Pride in what is true, lofty, godlike, is the safeguard against temptation. A generous pride in character and purity of soul is a hedge set round us by the Almighty; but false pride is the root of all sin. It disdains to confess error; sets itself up as faultless, or, at least, will try to make men believe it thinks itself so. Haughty denial, or contemptuous silence, or insolent blame of others, is its only thought. It would rather break than bend to own itself wrong. All the world must bow to it. It exaggerates its self-righteousness till it takes the

airs of a second God. Even if it see its error, it would on no account acknowledge it. At times it will go the length of showing extra graciousness to those whom it has wronged, as if to make amends, but they must bear the burden of the wrong they have endured till they forget it. Most dispositions yield to such overbearing self-assertion, and quietly put up with injustice for the sake of peace, or they are browbeaten into a belief that somehow they must themselves be wrong, after all; but now and then Greek meets Greek, and when neither will give way, the result is sad enough. I have known a mother and daughter not speak for months, because neither would own blame. Such a temper may be at home in Pandemonium, but it can never see heaven. If it did it would soon turn it to its opposite. If you can't bend your spirit to admit your sin against your fellow, don't think that your prayers for pardon can impose on God.

Some take refuge in a doubtful silence. They say it only breeds hypocrisy to own a fault, when, in all likelihood, you will soon repeat it. Take care. Under the air of humility, is there no excuse for stubborn pride in this? It cannot make you more disposed to do a wrong that you have humbled yourself to own it. The very shame of frequent reparation makes the repetition harder. The best of men never reach perfection. To delay confession is to lose the grace that makes us each day stronger. Daily discipline is needed for daily weakness. The stain and soil of each day's pilgrimage must be removed till the journey ends.

If hard, frank, and manly confession is healthful, it is the one condition of amendment; if pride or vanity keep us back, we think more of our self-righteousness than of our sins. A sense of guilt fills the heart with gratitude for pardon, confesses weakness, makes us willing to be wisely led. Self-righteousness is hateful even to man. In a child it bars all our hopes; in a man it shuts the heart against good.

There is no real happiness in stubborn self-sufficient pride. A sin unconfessed ruins our peace, as a loose wire spoils all the music of a whole keyboard. It is a thorn in the finger;

little in itself, perhaps, but setting the whole frame in a throbbing fever till it is out. Look at a child conscious of having done wrong, and yet unwilling to confess it. It would fain turn a new leaf, and show what purposes of goodness it has formed; but the fault, unconfessed and unforgiven, lies in its path, and hinders all. Once owned and dismissed from the bosom, the eye is bright again; the way is open for a new career; its self-respect has returned, and with it all things are changed. The poison in the veins is gone, and spiritual health returns.

Hearty confession tells as much on those we have wronged as on ourselves. The father rejoices over the returned prodigal as much as the prodigal over his unexpected welcome. A generous breast feels as much regret for the sin as anger for being its object. It is the loss, perhaps the death, of a fellow spirit; its return is restoration from we know not what unmeasured calamity. We never know how much we love till we have our better natures moved to pity. There is more, besides, to love, in broken sorrow and contrition than when there has been no such humiliation. It shows a tenderness that attracts; it is a homage paid to right, at the greatest of all costs—broken-hearted confession; it proves a loving respect for him whose favour is sought so earnestly. The heart, in such a case, is softened for a kindly harvest of all goodness. Self-sufficiency is gone; evil has lost its power. It has been tried and found to give only husks. Guilt asks only forgiveness, and begs to be let repay it by grateful love. A son is twice a son who, having left his father's house, returns to clasp his father's feet.

Yet, don't think that to confess sin is to merit heaven. We cannot trade with penitence. To buy favour by simply telling our crimes would be to turn them into capital. True confession, as St. Bernard says, blots out of God's book what sin has written in it, but it is because God's tender pity has taken that which is our least duty, and added to it the merits of Christ's passion. It shows a frame which makes it possible for him to receive us back as his children; but the grace that broke the proud heart came from himself at first.

CUNNINGHAM GEIKIE, D.D.

#### THE ANGEL'S VISIT.

**A**N angel to the earth had strayed,  
His golden harp was in his hand,  
And with a skilful touch he played  
The anthems of the better land.

Sweet are the notes, and full of peace  
The words which to the numbers flow;

Oh, ne'er has music aught like this  
Been heard the heavenly courts below.

He passed amid the changing crowd  
That thronged a city's busy street,  
Where voices mingled harsh and loud,  
With heavv tread of weary feet;

He strove to soothe with his glad strain  
A fair child who stood weeping near,  
But woke the softest notes in vain,  
He never raised his head to hear.

And gentle maids with smiling eye,  
And rosy lip, and shining hair,  
And forms that might with seraphs vie,  
Passed heedless of the heavenly air.

And men with high and haughty look  
Went proudly on their hurried way,  
Their haste no loitering then could brook,  
They never heard the angel play.

At length his steps a temple found,  
He sang the worshippers among;  
The walls alone gave back the sound,  
Unanswered rose the holy song.

In purer, loftier, tones he praised,  
The house with melody was filled;

No grateful tongue the chorus raised,  
And not a heart responsive thrilled.

Again another chord he tried  
(The loudest ever heard in heaven),  
"Hosannah to the Lamb who died!  
All honour to our Prince be given."

"Hosannah! 'twas for me He bled,"  
Full many an eager voice replies;  
A blissful tear the angel shed,  
And bore the echo to the skies.

Oh, what were all the songs above,  
Or hymns which cherubim employ,  
To tell the raptures of their love,  
Or waft their thoughts of sinless joy!

The praises of the Lamb they swell,  
Yet cold to us the strains would be,  
Could we not answer as they fell,  
"Hosannah! He was slain for me."

## A TRUE STORY OF A GREAT KING.



NCE upon a time there was a king, and he was very powerful and great. He was also very good, and so kind to his people that they all loved him very much. To show their gratitude to the king for all his kindness, and the many favours he was constantly bestowing upon them, and also to show the very great love which they had in their hearts for him, the people resolved to make him a present.

Some one asked the king if he would be pleased to accept a present from his people, and he said he would, but everybody was to be sure to give of their own free will, and only because they loved him.

Now there was a poor woman who loved the king very much, but she was very poor, and had not handsome gifts to offer like the rich people. She had three little children, and every day they had to get their dinner. So she counted out the money for the children's dinner, and then she saw that she had only three shillings over to give for the present to the king.

She was very sorry she had no more, but a rich man came to see her, and he said, "Oh, never mind, I will give you a piece of gold to put in, that will look much better, and it is all the same, for I was going to give it at any rate."

So the poor woman was quite pleased to give the piece of gold, and she went forward with it to the place where the king was standing to receive the gifts, smiling, and thinking to herself, "The king will be quite surprised to see me put in such a fine piece of gold;" and she looked up at him as she passed, expecting a nod of approval.

But the king did not smile or nod to her at all,

for he knew she was only a poor woman, and that she had three little children at home who would require their dinner. So the king looked very grave and troubled, as he said to her, "My poor woman, I am afraid this piece of gold is too much for you to give; did you buy the children's dinner before you left home?"

"Oh yes," said the woman, "that is all right; and indeed this money is not all mine, for I had only three shillings to give, but a rich man gave me a piece of his gold to put in."

Then the king looked very much displeased when he heard that, and he took the piece of gold and gave it back to the woman, saying, "I won't have any gifts in that way, the rich man can give his gold himself, if he wishes; and if you are ashamed of your own gift, so am I."

"Oh! please your Majesty," pleaded the poor woman, "take the three shillings, and I will give the rich man back his part of the money."

But the king would not accept the three shillings at all then, and the poor woman went home very much grieved, and crying because she had not been allowed to give anything for the present to the king.

Now there was another poor woman, and she too loved the king very very much, and so she also wished to give something to the present for her dear king; but she was so very poor that she had nothing at all in the world to give but only one little brown farthing.

And the rich man came to her, and said, "You can never put that dirty brown farthing among the bright gold pieces offered to the great king, here are

some new silver shillings, they will not look so bad, you can put them in; and it is all the same, for I was going to give them at any rate."

But this poor woman said, "Oh no! when I bring a gift to the good king it must be my very own. 'I am very sorry I have nothing better to give; but I will just slip it in quietly, so that the king won't take any notice of it; and if he throws it away afterwards, I don't mind, it is all I have, and I will have the pleasure of giving it to him whom I love so very very much.'"

So this poor woman went forward with the rest; but she walked very slowly, and hung down her head, being sorry her gift was so small; and when she passed the king she never once looked up, but just slipped her little brown farthing into the plate among the rest of the gifts.

When she was turning away she felt some one give her a tap on the shoulder, and when she looked round the king was looking down to her, and smiling very graciously. "My good woman," he said, "was it you who put in this costly gift?"

And as she looked in his hand she saw something very like her old brown farthing; but just as she was wondering if that could be what the king meant, the farthing began to grow brighter and brighter, till the poor woman could scarcely look at it, for it had changed into a beautiful locket, all shining with gold and diamonds, and other precious stones.

The poor woman gave a little sigh of disappointment in her heart, but she looked up straight into the king's face, and said, "Oh no! I gave only one little brown farthing."

"Take it into your own hand and see," said the king, still smiling.

So the woman took it as he bade her, and then she saw that it was her farthing after all. "Yes," she said, feeling greatly surprised, "that is the very farthing I put in, for I tried hard to clean it up, and could only get it to look a little bright at the edge." So she laid it back again in the king's hand, and as soon as he touched it there it was shining and sparkling as before.

Then the king said, "I thank you very much for this beautiful gift, it is very precious to me." And he took it, and hung it upon the chain that was round his neck, and the poor woman went home quite happy because the king had been pleased to accept her gift, and loving him a thousand times more than before, if that were possible.

Now it is more than eighteen hundred years since that day, and the great and good king has been wearing that poor woman's brown farthing at his chain all the time. And whenever any poor woman wishes to offer him a gift from the great love that is in her heart, and is afraid to bring it because it seems so

small, he points to the shining locket, and says, "Why, this was once only a little brown farthing, and it pleased me as much as the rich man's gold, for with me 'a man is accepted according to what he hath, and not according to what he hath not.'"

C. P. CRAIG.

### "THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 800.

269. Jehoram (2 Chron. xxi. 20); Joash (2 Chron. xxiv. 25); Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi. 23); Manasseh (2 Chron. xxxiii. 20).

270. Numb. xiii. 22.—"Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt."

271. Prov. xxv. 7.—"Better is it that it be said unto thee, Come up hither; than that thou shouldst be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen."

272. 1 Cor. xiv. 21.—"In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people." The quotation is from Isa. xxviii. 11.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 816.

273. At our Lord's baptism (Matt. iii. 16). On the day of Pentecost (Acts. ii. 4). When St. Peter makes his defence for going in unto the Gentiles referring to the case of Cornelius and his household he says, "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning (Acts xi. 15).

274. Exod. iii. 12.—"This shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain." 2 Kings xix. 29.—"This shall be a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat this year such things as grow of themselves," &c. &c. Isa. vii. 14.—"The Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

275. Hebrews iii. 7.—"Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith), To-day if ye will hear his voice," &c.

276. John iii. 3, 5.

277. Matt. v. 45.—"That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven."

278. Isa. i. 11, 12, 13.

### EDITORIAL NOTE.

*In the next Number of THE QUIVER will be commenced a New Serial Story, entitled HIS BY RIGHT, by the Author of "Under Foot," "John Hesketh's Charge," &c. &c., Illustrated by F. Wilfrid Lawson. In the same Number will be commenced a series of Bible Lessons, being explanatory and suggestive notes upon portions of Holy Scripture for the use of Parents and Sunday School Teachers.*



